

1 **Chapter 10**

2 **Grade Six – World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations**

3 **Global Overview: Early Beginnings to 300 CE**

4 • How did the environment influence human migration, ancient ways of life,
5 and the development of societies?

6 • What were the early human ways of life and how did they change over
7 time? (hunting and gathering, agriculture, civilizations, urban societies,
8 states, and empires)

9 • How did the major religious and philosophical systems (Judaism, Greek
10 thought, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism) support individuals, rulers,
11 and societies?

12 • How did societies interact with each other? How did connections between
13 societies increase over time?

14 Students in sixth-grade world history and geography classrooms learn about
15 the lives of the earliest humans, the development of tools, the foraging way of
16 life, agriculture, and the emergence of civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the
17 Indus River valley, China, Mesoamerica, and the Mediterranean basin. Although
18 teachers should keep the focus on ancient events and problems, this course
19 gives students the opportunity to grapple with geography, environmental issues,
20 political systems and power structures, and civic engagement with fundamental
21 ideas about citizenship, freedom, morality, and law, which also exist in the

22 modern world. Students practice history as an interpretative discipline. They read
23 written primary sources, investigate visual primary sources, and learn how to
24 analyze multiple points of view, cite evidence from sources, and make claims
25 based on that evidence in writing and speaking.

26 Although most of the sixth-grade standards are organized regionally, there
27 are patterns which the teacher uses to connect the regional studies into a world
28 history. These are:

- 29 • The movement of early humans across continents and their adaptations to
30 the geography and climate of new regions.
- 31 • The rise of diverse civilizations, characterized by economies of surplus,
32 centralized states, social hierarchies, cities, networks of trade, art and
33 architecture, and systems of writing.
- 34 • The growth of urban societies and changes in societies (social class
35 divisions, slavery, divisions of labor between men and women).
- 36 • The development of new political institutions (monarchy, empire,
37 democracy) and new ideas (citizenship, freedom, morality, law).
- 38 • The birth and spread of religious and philosophical systems (Judaism,
39 Greek thought, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism) which responded to
40 human needs and supported social norms and power structures.
- 41 • The development and growth of links between societies through trade,
42 diplomacy, migration, conquest, and the diffusion of goods and ideas.

43 The first section below outlines the development of these themes throughout the
44 world over time. It is divided into three chronological periods: Beginnings to 4000

45 BCE; 4000-1000 BCE: Kingdoms and Innovations; and 1000 BCE-300 CE: An
46 Age of Empires and Interactions. The second section outlines the development
47 of these themes following the regional structure of the existing 6th-grade
48 standards.

49 *Beginnings to 4000 BCE*

50 PC: Even in the current age of technological advances, most of the story
51 regarding human origins remains unknown. The evidence is fragmented, open to
52 debate, and subject to different interpretations. The narrative given below
53 assumes that humans are the result of unguided biological evolution, a
54 materialistic process without intervention by an intelligent agent (such as God).
55 This assumption is a hypothesis – not proven fact.

56 Many people believe that humans (and indeed all life forms) have a
57 teleological rather than a naturalistic origin. Teleology is the search for
58 intentional design or purpose in nature. There is considerable evidence that
59 points to an intelligent cause for the universe, life on Earth, and life's diversity.

60 RFC: This entire section is biased and speculative. It presents an unproven
61 narrative as “fact,” and it totally lacks objectivity and religious neutrality. One can
62 make a good argument that this section should be eliminated, since human
63 history really begins with the development of writing and true human civilization.

64 One can debate whether the subject of human origins should have any place
65 in the curriculum, but it certainly should not be taught as a matter of history. If
66 covered at all, biological origins should be studied objectively in a biology class

67 which includes prerequisites like cell structure, life processes, heredity,
68 ecosystems, and evolution and design theory.

69 Assuming that the “beginnings to 4000 BCE” section will remain in the
70 Framework, several changes are suggested below that will help to alleviate some
71 of the more speculative and biased statements.

72 PC: The origins narrative proposed by many anthropologists and evolutionary
73 biologists contains the following general features. Modern humans, *Homo*
74 *Sapiens*, are thought to be members of the Great Ape family. About 25 million
75 years ago a medium-sized primate group is believed to have split into apes and
76 monkeys; both groups found an ecological niche in trees. Apes didn’t have tails
77 and relied primarily on their arms for locomotion by swinging in trees (as opposed
78 to monkeys who primarily used four legs for travel). Apes developed a keener
79 sense of vision; monkeys developed a better sense of smell. Subsequently, the
80 ape family may have branched into two major lines—hominins and what we now
81 usually call apes. The ape strand led to the present day chimpanzees, bonobos,
82 and gorillas.

83 Our proposed early ancestors, the hominins, and chimpanzees, our closest
84 non-hominin relative, appeared about 6 million years ago. Both were partially bi-
85 pedal. By 2.5 million years ago, these early hominins began had evolved to
86 walking up-right. After passing through the australopithecine (southern ape)
87 stage, it is proposed that the hominins eventually gave rise to our genus *Homo*
88 (our first human-like ancestors), which initially appeared about 2.5 million years
89 ago in Africa. The brains of this new genus were about the same size as

90 chimpanzees but grew steadily through the next million years. There were
91 several species of these early homo lines whose population began to grow,
92 though very gradually, after they began to make use of tools more extensively.

93 Our early human ancestors **developed evolved** larger brains (**perhaps** in
94 response to the survival needs of hunting and gathering in small bands),
95 employed rudimentary stone tools for skinning animals and weapons (such as
96 spear heads and knives), developed simple clothing and shelter, and used fire
97 opportunistically. Pair-bonding, which allowed for more extensive child
98 rearing, contributed to survival success.

99 There are various theories of how these hominins **originated evolved**. Many
100 scientists believe that hominins arose in east Africa, while others suggest a
101 Middle Eastern origin. Some **Most** scholars suggest that the continued growth of
102 brain size necessitated larger food intake. About 2 million years ago, a few of our
103 early human ancestors migrated out of their **east African** homeland **and spread**
104 **out into Africa and Asia to the rest of that continent** and subsequently **spread**
105 throughout the world --to Europe, and as far east as Indonesia and China. The
106 various species **or varieties** of the homo line continued to evolve and eventually
107 became the more modern *Homo erectus, Neanderthals, and Denisovans*. Using
108 archeological evidence, such as the carbon dating of bones, stone tools and
109 weapons, DNA evidence of matrilineal and patrilineal descent, the examination of
110 food remains and campsites, students can consider, **How do we know about**
111 **these early proto-humans? Why did they succeed in replacing other**
112 **Hominin lines?**

113 It is postulated that around 200,000 years ago our direct human ancestors
114 appeared, modern *Homo sapiens* (the wise man), who were anatomically the
115 same as modern humans. At that time *Homo sapiens* ~~there was nothing~~
116 ~~particularly special about our species compared to the other homo species. We~~
117 co-existed with several other homo lines who also possessed similar brain sizes,
118 walked upright, used fire, ate a variety of foods, were skilled gatherers,
119 progressed from scavengers to hunters of large animals, and used comparable
120 tools. However, *Homo sapiens* were lighter, less muscled, more adaptable, and
121 kept developing larger brains.

122 About 70,000 years ago *Homo sapiens* began a major transformation. The
123 species underwent a cognitive revolution which allowed us to acquire
124 sophisticated language, the ability to abstract, imagine, and plan, and to develop
125 the social skills and myth-making capacity required for group cohesion. ~~Whether~~
126 ~~the acquisition of superior intelligence was due to natural evolution or else~~
127 ~~involved teleological intervention is open to debate.~~ These new talents permitted
128 *Homo sapiens* to develop more sophisticated tools and inventions, learn from
129 one another and pass technical, cultural, and organizational knowledge from one
130 generation to the next. *Homo sapiens* also began to act collectively in large
131 groups for foraging, hunting, and defense. These talents allowed our species to
132 learn from experience and adapt more easily to a changing conditions.
133 Consequently, modern humans were able to survive the varied and extreme
134 climates found on this planet.

135 Under one ~~highly regarded~~ explanation, the climate worsened around
136 160,000 years ago, leaving much of ~~Africa and Asia African~~ uninhabitable. The
137 numbers of our immediate ancestors declined precipitously and some sought
138 refuge ~~in coastal areas on the southern coast~~ where they learned to exploit the
139 rich shell food beds for food. Unlike territory with scattered resources, territory
140 that featured dense collections of resources required a stationary home base and
141 defense against others. These ancestors evolved a ~~genetically encoded~~
142 prosocial proclivity, the ability to use sophisticated language and symbols, more
143 advanced conceptual and cognitive capacities, and social lifestyle shifts to
144 encourage sophisticated innovation and cooperation with unrelated individuals.
145 These traits allowed them to better exploit and defend their resource-rich
146 territories against invaders. With their increased brains and ability to cooperate
147 they became even more inventive. Their development of projectile weaponry,
148 especially when coated with poison, was a revolutionary innovation that allowed
149 for safer hunting. (Neanderthals never discovered bows and arrows and many
150 were killed getting too close ~~to~~ large animals in the hunt).

151 The story of how our now fully human ancestors populated the earth starting
152 around 70,000 years ago is fascinating. ~~Although the general narrative is~~
153 ~~generally understood,~~ Some details are known, some ~~are~~ controversial, and
154 some ~~have~~ yet to be discovered. Students can consider the impact of population
155 pressure, the availability of untapped hunting grounds, warfare, or even a sense
156 of adventure as they consider the evidence for the migration and various routes
157 taken. **Why did modern humans leave their homelands Africa? What**

158 **happened to all the other Hominids ~~in-Africa~~, or the Neanderthals who had**
159 **evolved from earlier humans in Europe? How did modern humans travel**
160 **across the hemispheres? How violent or aggressive were these early**
161 **humans?** In their investigations, students can consider the fact that as the
162 modern humans peopled the world, the other lines became extinct. They can
163 consider how modern humans from Indonesia crossed land bridges and
164 developed the sea-faring technology to settle the continent of Australia more than
165 40,000 years ago. And students can develop their own ~~proposals explanations~~
166 for how 14,000 years our species had populated both North and South America
167 and had peopled every continent except Antarctica (although some islands such
168 as New Zealand and Hawaii were not inhabited until much later).

169 In all these places people survived by foraging, hunting, and fishing, and they
170 lived in bands, that is, communities typically numbering no more than a few
171 dozen men, women, and children. World population of our species began to rise
172 but very gradually. Often, these bands were loosely associated with larger
173 groups, such as tribes who had a common language and belief systems. For
174 example, when the British conquered Australia in the eighteenth century, they
175 found 300,000 to 700,000 hunter-gatherers organized into between 200-600
176 tribes (further divided into multiple bands) each with its own language, customs,
177 norms, and belief systems.

178 Around 10,000 years ago, some humans began to domesticate plants and
179 animals and experiment with farming. Others learned to mine for desired metals
180 and precious stones after smelting was discovered. Their activities led to the

181 development of new ways of life: agriculture in settled villages, trade, and
182 pastoral nomadism. Students investigate why these radical changes began to
183 occur after humans had lived exclusively as gatherers and hunters and still
184 managed to adapt successfully to many climates and climatic changes over
185 hundreds of thousands of years. **Why did some humans start to plant and**
186 **harvest crops, live in crowded villages, and later build cities, accept the**
187 **rule of monarchs, and pay taxes? Why did the pace of historical change in**
188 **certain parts of the world begin to speed up?**

189 During this period many technological and social discoveries or inventions
190 occurred building on the previous breakthroughs, such as use of fire, cooking,
191 boats, use of tools for hunting, defense, and daily life, and tools to make tools,
192 language, expressions of emotions, the ability to understand what another
193 person was thinking, planning, pair-bonding, cooperation, bands and tribes,
194 clothing, sewing, containers, and art, including pigmentation, music and dance.
195 The new innovations included domestication of animals and farming, smelting of
196 copper, then bronze, then iron, the plough, twisted rope, musical instruments,
197 beer and wine, religion and ancestor worship, more complex boats, and trade
198 allowed for an increasing population and standard of living. Working in small
199 groups, students can explore the impact of these discoveries and innovations by
200 examining one discovery or invention in-depth to develop and present a short
201 oral presentation that both explains the innovation and speculates as to its
202 overall significance.

203 *4000-1000 BCE: Kingdoms and Innovations*

204 At the beginning of the period between 4000 and 1000 BCE, the earliest
205 complex urban societies, or civilizations, rose. By the end of this period, there
206 were many urban societies, and their interaction had accelerated. During those
207 three millennia, numerous technical and intellectual innovations appeared,
208 especially in the dense agricultural societies that arose in the Middle East
209 (notably Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, and Persia), the Nile Valley of Africa,
210 northern India, China, and the lands around the Aegean Sea. By about 2000
211 BCE, urban societies also began to emerge in the Americas, starting with the
212 Olmec civilization in Mesoamerica and Chavín in South America. Many
213 inventions and ideas fundamental to modern life appeared, including the wheel,
214 writing, more complex metallurgy, codes of law, mathematics, and astronomy.
215 While cities grew in some areas, hunter-gatherers and village farmers remained
216 in other areas. Increased trade occurred. Global population rose at a faster rate
217 than it had before 4000 BCE.

218 Powerful people (warlords) took control of the tribes in larger areas and
219 eventually the strongest warlords formed states or city-states with governments
220 headed by kings or, very occasionally, queens, often claiming authority from
221 gods and passing on power to their own descendants. Supported by political
222 elites (nobles, officials, warriors) and priests, these monarchs imposed taxes on
223 ordinary city dwellers and rural people to pay for bureaucracies, armies, irrigation
224 works, and monumental architecture. Writing systems were first invented to serve
225 governments, religions, and merchants, and later became means of transmitting

226 religious, scientific, and literary ideas. Some of the religions of this era, such as
227 early Hinduism and Judaism, set the stage for later world belief systems.
228 Migrations continued as farming peoples slowly expanded into tropical Africa
229 and Southeast Asia, North and South America, and the temperate woodlands of
230 Europe. In the steppes of Central Asia, a new way of life and type of society
231 emerged after 4000 BCE. There, communities lived by herding domesticated
232 animals, such as sheep, cattle, or horses. Their economy, called pastoral
233 nomadism, permitted humans to adapt in larger numbers to climates which were
234 too dry for farming. Pastoral nomads lived mainly on the products of their
235 livestock. They grazed herds over vast areas and came regularly in contact with
236 urban societies, often to trade, sometimes to make war. By the end of this period,
237 urban societies ruled by monarchies had greatly expanded their control over
238 agricultural regions, but many people still lived in small village, pastoral nomad,
239 and hunter-gatherer societies.

240 *1000 BCE-300 CE: An Age of Empires and Interchange*

241 During these 1,300 years, many patterns of change established in the
242 previous era continued, but at a faster pace. The number of cities multiplied, and
243 states appeared in new forms that were bigger, more complex, and more efficient
244 at coercing people and extracting taxes from them. A new form of state
245 developed – the empire. Among the largest states of that era were the Assyrian
246 and Babylonian Empires centered in Mesopotamia, the Achaemenid, Parthian,
247 and Sasanian Empires in Persia, the Kushan Empire in Central Asia, the Maurya
248 Empire in India, and the kingdom of Kush in the upper Nile River valley. The

249 largest of all were the Roman Empire, which came to embrace the entire
250 Mediterranean Sea region and much of Europe, and the Han Empire in China. At
251 the dawn of the first millennium CE, these two states together ruled a small part
252 of the earth's land area, but roughly one-half of the world's population.

253 A second key development of that era was the establishment of a thicker web
254 of interregional communication and transport, which allowed goods,
255 technologies, and ideas to move long distances. Interlocking networks of roads,
256 such as the Silk Road, and sea lanes in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean
257 Sea, connected empires, kingdoms, and regions of the Eastern Hemisphere with
258 one another. Merchants and other travelers created similar interconnections in
259 Mesoamerica and along South America's Andean mountain spine. Merchants
260 traveled long distances in caravans and ships to connect farming and urban
261 societies that lay along the rims of seas, deserts, and steppes. In this period, the
262 religions of Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, and Christianity and the philosophies
263 of Confucianism and Greek thought emerged and spread within empires and
264 along trade routes. These religious and philosophical systems changed as they
265 developed, in order to address human needs, support social order, and adapt to
266 different societies.

267 The following section discusses the development of the above themes
268 following the existing sixth-grade standards. Teachers use the guiding questions
269 to focus on course themes and draw comparisons with other regional units.

270

271 **Early Humankind and the Development of Human Societies**

272 • How did the environment influence the migrations of early humans? How
273 did early humans adapt to new environments and climate changes?

274 • How did people live by the gathering and hunting way of life?
275 • Why did some people develop agriculture and pastoral nomadism? What
276 were the effects of these new ways of life?

277 In the first unit, students learn about the emergence and migrations of early
278 humans, the gathering and hunting way of life, and the emergence of village
279 agriculture and pastoral nomadism. To frame the topic of the emergence and
280 migrations of early humans, the teacher uses these questions: **How did the**
281 **environment influence the migrations of early humans? How did early**
282 **humans adapt to new environments and climate changes?** For millions of
283 years, the genetic ancestors of humans, known as hominins (or hominids), used
284 stone tools and lived on foods found by gathering and hunting. Archeological
285 evidence shows students that our earliest forebears evolved in eastern Africa
286 and that small bands of those ancestors migrated into Eurasia about 1.9 million
287 years ago, driven by population gains and increased competition for food. Around
288 800,000 years ago, early humans discovered how to control fire, allowing them to
289 cook food, keep away predators, and burn areas of land in order to flush out
290 game.

291 *Homo sapiens*, that is, anatomically modern humans, evolved in Africa
292 around 200,000 years ago. Modern humans adapted well to new environments,
293 developing increasingly diverse stone and bone tools for collecting and
294 processing food. About 100,000 years ago, our species developed the capacity

295 for language, which accelerated technological change. Spoken language and the
296 evolution of pro-social mental and social structures enabled humans to teach
297 complex skills to each other, cooperate with others, pass down ideas to the next
298 generation, and talk about their world and the cosmos.

299 After leaving Africa 90,000 to 100,000 years ago, humans may have reached
300 Australia 60,000 or more years ago and Europe 40,000 years ago. In the Middle
301 East and Europe, humans encountered Neanderthals, a related hominid species,
302 who became extinct about 28,000 years ago. Early humans reached the
303 Americas from Eurasia at least 12,000 years ago, possibly earlier. Students use
304 maps to identify the patterns of early human migration and settlement which
305 populated the major regions of the world. Reading climate zone maps and
306 studying climate change during the Pleistocene (glacial and interglacial periods)
307 helps students develop an understanding of the effects of climate on the Earth
308 and on the expansion of human settlements. In California EEI Curriculum Unit
309 6.1.1, “Paleolithic People: Tools, Tasks and Fire,” students analyze why humans
310 chose certain migration routes, settled in particular locations, developed
311 lifestyles, cultures, and methods to extract, harvest, and consume natural
312 resources to understand how early humans adapted to the natural systems and
313 environmental cycles in different regions, and how these factors influence the
314 settlement of human communities. Students analyze how human migrants might
315 adapt to a colder or hotter climate, growth of human population, competition with
316 another hominid species, floods, or droughts.

317 Although humans made many adaptations to the conditions of their
318 environments, until about 10,000 years ago, they all lived by the same way of life,
319 hunting and gathering. The teacher introduces the first of the ways of life
320 students will study in this course with this framing question: **How did people live**
321 **by the gathering and hunting way of life?** There was a division of labor
322 between women and men, but they contributed equally to supporting the band.
323 Adult men were more likely to travel away from the camp to forage or hunt, while
324 women, who were likely to be pregnant or have small children to care for,
325 collected edible plants and trapped small animals close to home. Because
326 gatherers and hunters need a large area to support themselves, bands were
327 small. Social cooperation was very important, but there were few social
328 differences between people.

329 To understand the gathering and hunting way of life and appreciate the
330 linguistic and cognitive advantages of *Homo sapiens*, students analyze primary
331 sources from this long time period before written language. Our knowledge of this
332 era depends on evidence from material remains, especially from bones and
333 stone tools, and, more recently, from research on human DNA and long-term
334 climatic and geological change. Students can analyze cave paintings from
335 Chauvet, Lascaux, and Altamira, with pairs of students first answering a
336 descriptive question, such as: **What colors did the artist use? What kinds of**
337 **animals are shown in the painting?** and then making an interpretation about:
338 **What was important to hunter-gatherer people? Why do you think the artist**
339 **painted this?** Student pairs can then share their interpretations, claims, and

340 evidence with the whole class. Students use academic language to articulate
341 their observations and interpretations to another student and the whole class,
342 supporting the development of oral discourse ability. Students investigate the
343 dramatic changes that took place when some humans began to domesticate
344 plants and animals and settle in one place year round, with these questions: **Why**
345 **did some people develop agriculture and pastoral nomadism? What were**
346 **the effects of these new ways of life?** Teachers begin by asking students why
347 a gatherer might start planting seeds. **How might a hunter start to tame an**
348 **animal?** Archaeological evidence indicates that in the Middle East, and probably
349 Egypt, foraging bands settled near stands of edible grasses, the genetic
350 ancestors of wheat and other grains. People began deliberately to sow plants
351 that had favorable qualities, for example, varieties that were large, tasty, and
352 easy to cook. In this way, they gradually domesticated those plants.
353 Domesticated plants and animals became increasingly important to human diets
354 regionally and turned people into farmers, that is, *producers* of food rather than
355 simply *collectors* of it.

356 This huge change introduced a new way of life for humans – village
357 agriculture. They could therefore live in larger settlements and accumulate more
358 material goods than when they foraged for a living. Teachers emphasize that
359 agriculture involved not only the act of farming but also a whole new way of life
360 based on food production. Improved production meant that not everyone in a
361 village had to spend all of their time securing the food supply. Food surplus also
362 invited conflict with neighboring tribes eager to expand their own reserves.

363 Another result of village agriculture is the development of tools. Early farmers
364 gradually developed more varied stone tools, such as sickles to cut grain and
365 grinding stones to make flour. They used fire to transform clay into durable
366 pottery. They wove wool, cotton, and linen into textiles. Because the early
367 millennia of agriculture involved more sophisticated stone tools, it is known as the
368 Neolithic, or New Stone Age.

369 One of the major effects of the village agricultural way of life was an increase
370 in social differences. In early villages adult men and women probably worked
371 together to perform many necessary tasks and treated each other with near
372 equality. Because villages likely included several extended families living closely
373 together, however, leaders inevitably emerged to guide group decisions and
374 settle personal conflicts. Also, as soon as some families accumulated more
375 stored food than did others and appointed guards to protect their wealth, the
376 conditions for social inequality appeared. Teachers may ask students to examine
377 differences in the contents of graves that archaeologists have excavated—some
378 graves having jewelry, shells, or other fine materials and some having none of
379 these things—for evidence about social ranking and inequality in early
380 agricultural communities.

381 Agriculture developed independently in different areas of the world between
382 12,000 and 5,000 years ago and gradually spread outward from those areas.
383 Students should compare physical and environmental maps with maps of the first
384 sites of food production to make interpretations.

385 In some areas of the world, such as the steppes of Central Asia, the climate
386 was unfavorable for farming, but ideal for supporting herds of domesticated
387 animals, such as sheep, cattle, or horses. In these areas, some people created a
388 new way of life based on the products of their livestock. They were nomadic and
389 did not settle in villages. In fact, they were highly mobile, and often came into
390 contact with settled societies, often to trade and sometimes to attack and
391 conquer. By 4000 BCE there were three ways of life followed by humans –
392 gathering and hunting, village agriculture, and pastoral nomadism.

393

394 **The Early Civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush**

395 • How did civilizations, complex urban societies, develop in Mesopotamia,
396 Egypt, and Kush?

397 • What environmental factors helped civilizations grow? What impact did
398 civilizations and complex urban societies have on the surrounding
399 environment?

400 • How did people's lives change as states and empires took over these
401 areas (increase in social differences, rule by monarchs, laws)?

402 • From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade, and other links grow
403 among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, India, and the
404 eastern Mediterranean?

405 Between 10,000 and 4,000 BCE, farming spread widely across Africa and
406 Eurasia. In the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates (Fertile Crescent) and Nile
407 rivers, people adapted to the rivers' flood cycles and the related seasonal cycles

408 of plants and animals. Their adaptations allowed them to produce a surplus of
409 food, which led to other changes in their cultures. Students learn that people who
410 lived near the banks of those rivers began to use irrigation techniques to control
411 water and extend farming, despite an increasingly arid climate. A similar process
412 got under way in the Indus River valley in India and in the Huang He (Yellow)
413 River valley in northern China some centuries later. To frame the study of the
414 emergence of civilizations, the teacher uses the question: **How did civilizations,**
415 **complex urban societies, develop in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush?** When
416 communities began to intensify farming with new techniques, they were able to
417 produce surplus food. Early farmers increased the size of their farms and used
418 more resources in order to increase their yield. Focusing on the relationships
419 between resource requirements, agricultural production, and population growth,
420 students learn that the population growth near agricultural areas was a first step
421 in the development of larger settlements and cities. The surpluses they produced
422 led to the rise of more complex social, economic, and political systems in those
423 valleys.

424 The civilization of Mesopotamia, located in the valley of the Euphrates and
425 Tigris Rivers (modern Iraq and part of Syria), and Egypt, which stretched along
426 the Nile River, both arose in the fourth millennium BCE. Kush, a civilization in the
427 upper Nile River region south of Egypt emerged in the second millennium BCE.
428 Teachers introduce students to the environmental roots of civilization with this
429 question: **What environmental factors helped civilizations grow? What**
430 **impact did civilizations and complex urban societies have on the**

431 **surrounding environment?** All these societies depended on their river locations
432 to build dense agricultural societies. First students examine maps to identify the
433 environmental factors, such as climate, topography, and flood patterns, that
434 caused these civilizations to rise up along rivers. The teacher might use either of
435 the California EEI Curriculum Units 6.2.1.River Systems and Ancient Peoples, or
436 6.2.2 Advances in Ancient Civilizations. These lessons emphasize environmental
437 causes and effects and the influence that the rise of civilization along these rivers
438 had on the organization, economies, and belief systems of Mesopotamia and
439 Egypt.

440 Teachers guide students through the development of each of these three
441 civilizations separately, while frequently pointing out connections, similarities, and
442 differences among the civilizations (and also the Harappa civilization along the
443 Indus River and Chinese civilization along the Huang He [Yellow] River). The
444 following section discusses Mesopotamia first, followed by Egypt, and then by
445 Kush.

446 In the third millennium BCE, Mesopotamia was divided into a number of
447 kingdoms. Beginning in Sumer, the region of southern Mesopotamia, those early
448 kingdoms were dominated by large walled cities, each enclosing a royal palace
449 and a temple dedicated to the local god, along with densely packed housing for
450 the population. Walls were built around many of these cities in response to
451 aggression by neighboring kingdoms and competing warlords seeking to expand
452 their territory through conquest. By around 3,000 BCE, a second cluster of cities
453 arose in northern Mesopotamia and the area of modern-day Syria. Rulers of

454 these cities claimed to possess authority divinely bestowed by their city's god or
455 goddess. The city-states of Mesopotamia frequently fought one another over
456 resources, but they also formed alliances. At the end of the third millennium,
457 Sargon of Akkad (2270-2215 BCE) managed briefly to forge a unified empire
458 through conquest.

459 Students also examine the connections between Mesopotamia and other
460 areas with this question: **From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade,**
and other links grow among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt,
Kush, India, and the eastern Mediterranean? Trade was extensive, not only
463 among the Mesopotamian kingdoms, but also between Mesopotamia and
464 surrounding regions. The land had rich soil that produced abundant crops, but it
465 had no minerals. Merchants imported a red stone called carnelian from the Indus
466 Valley, a blue stone called lapis lazuli from what is now Afghanistan, and silver
467 from Anatolia (modern Turkey), which were used for jewelry and decorations in
468 temples and palaces. From the Elamites on the Iranian plateau, merchants
469 imported wood, copper, lead, silver, and tin. In some periods, trade and
470 diplomatic exchanges took place between Mesopotamia and Egypt. Teachers
471 introduce students to Mesopotamia's numerous technological and social
472 innovations, including the wheel, the wooden plow, the seed drill, and improved
473 bronze metallurgy, as well as advances in mathematics, astronomical
474 measurement, and law. Essential for the functioning of the legal system and of
475 the administrative structure of Mesopotamian kingdoms was the cuneiform
476 writing system. The signs were written on clay tablets and could be used to

477 represent phonetically many ancient languages, including Sumerian and
478 Akkadian, the languages of Mesopotamia. Mesopotamians had a complex legal
479 system and written laws, of which Hammurabi's are the best preserved, though
480 not the earliest.

481 Next students explore the development of Mesopotamia society with this
482 question: **How did people's lives change as states and empires took over**
483 **this area?** In the Mesopotamian cities and states, a small elite group of political
484 leaders (officials, warriors, "nobles") and priests held the most wealth and power,
485 while the majority of people remained poor farmers, artisans, or slaves.

486 Supported by the elites, kings established dynasties, and built large palaces.
487 Social groups were increasingly divided into a true social hierarchy.
488 Mesopotamia was a patriarchy and men had more power than women. However,
489 priestesses and noblewomen did have some access to power. For example,
490 Sargon placed his daughter in the powerful position of high priestess of the moon
491 god, starting a tradition that continued in the reigns of subsequent kings.
492 Monarchs' wives sometimes controlled their own estates. In the Mesopotamian
493 cities (and in all civilizations) the increase in social differences was a dramatic
494 change for humans.

<p style="text-align: center;">Grade Six Classroom Example: Hammurabi's Code</p>
<p>To build student understanding of how human life changed in these early civilizations, Mrs. Stanton organizes a close reading of excerpts from Hammurabi's laws. Knowing that the text will be challenging for English Learners,</p>

she identifies the key passages in the text, the unfamiliar names, the academic vocabulary, and the literacy challenges that students will face. After putting students in groups of four, Mrs. Stanton distributes excerpted texts containing the first sentence of Hammurabi's prologue and the first six phrases of the second sentence (for all groups) and sets of six laws (different selections for each group which all show differentiated punishments for different classes of people.) Mrs. Stanton then explains that students will be analyzing this primary source to gather evidence to answer the question: **How did people's lives change under the rule of Hammurabi and the civilization in Mesopotamia?** She reminds students of the egalitarian life of the hunter-gatherers and limited hierarchy of villages. The students read their texts silently first and then discuss in their groups: **What is this text about? What crimes do the laws punish?** For the second reading, Mrs. Stanton guides students through a sentence deconstruction chart of the first sentence, followed by a whole class discussion of Hammurabi's claims to divine authority as a protector of the people. For the third reading, the students mark up the text and write annotations in the margins. The teacher then models the structure of a social hierarchy pyramid on the board. For the fourth reading, each group analyzes their selection of laws, identifies the social groups, draws a social hierarchy diagram of those groups, and reports to the class orally and in writing. After class discussion, students answer text-dependent questions in a fifth reading. The students then write a summary paragraph about Hammurabi's Laws, using the words: monarch, prince, rule, Babylon, Marduk,

conquered, righteousness, and social hierarchy.

CA HSS Standards: 6.2.4

CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8): Research, Evidence, and Point of View 3,
Historical Interpretation 1

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RI.6.3, RI.6.10, SL.6.1, SL.6.4, L.6.4, RH.6–8.1,
RH.6–8.2, RH.6–8.4, WHST.6–8.2, WHST.6–8.9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.1, 2, 6, 11; ELD.PII.6.1

495

496 Next students look at how the states and empires in Mesopotamia changed
497 over time, focused on this question: **How did civilizations, complex urban**
498 **societies, develop in Mesopotamia?** Over the centuries, the cities of
499 Mesopotamia were divided into multiple states, conquered by invaders, and
500 combined into new states. While it is not possible or desirable to teach all the
501 states and groups that ruled over Mesopotamia, it is critical that students
502 understand the importance of the Persian Empire. The names of the empire
503 changed often with changes in the ruling groups (Achaemenids, Seleucids,
504 Parthians, Sasanians), but the Persian Empire maintained its continuity and its
505 domination over Mesopotamia, Persia, and often wide areas of southwestern
506 Asia and Egypt, from c. 500 BCE to c. 630 CE. It was the primary political and
507 cultural presence in western Asia during that period. Because the Persians
508 fought wars with the ancient Greeks, Greek writers often criticized the Persians.
509 However, the Persian ruled over a very large empire, from the Aegean Sea to the
510 Indus River, with policies of multicultural tolerance. After conquest by Alexander

511 the Great, Persia became a Hellenistic state under the Seleucids until the
512 Parthians conquered the area. The Parthians nevertheless maintained some
513 Hellenistic features and trade and diplomatic connections with other Hellenistic
514 states from Carthage to Bactria. Parthian Persia was the main rival of the Roman
515 Empire in the eastern Mediterranean. The Sasanians, who took over in 224 CE,
516 actively promoted Persian nationalism and Zoroastrianism as a state religion. As
517 the main heir of Mesopotamian civilization, the Persian Empire played as large a
518 role in world history as the Greeks or Romans.

519 Teachers point out that Mesopotamia and Egypt (as well as many other early
520 states) were dominated by a combination of religion and kingship. As they study
521 Egypt, students focus on the question: **How did civilizations, complex urban**
522 **societies, develop in Egypt?** They learn that from 3000 to 1500, unlike
523 Mesopotamia, Egypt was usually united under a single king. Egyptian kings
524 claimed not only to have divine approval but to be deities themselves. The
525 Egyptians built immense pyramid tombs and grand temples for their rulers.
526 Teachers focus students' attention on the social and political power structures
527 with this question: **How did people's lives change as states and empires took**
528 **over this area?** The Egyptians prized order (*ma'at*) in all aspects of life,
529 including social rules and even careful preparations for the afterlife. Their social
530 hierarchy was an elaborate structure dominated by small elite groups of political
531 leaders (regional lords, officials, and warriors) and priests. The teacher points
532 out the similarity to Mesopotamia. Students analyze the Egyptian writing system
533 in comparison with Mesopotamian cuneiform. Both used a combination of signs

534 that represented sounds (phonemes) and ones that signified word or phrase
535 meanings (logograms). The Egyptians, however, used hieroglyphs and papyrus
536 and stone as writing surfaces rather than clay tablets.

537 Around 1500 BCE, Egypt entered the era known as the New Kingdom. Kings
538 such as Thutmose III expanded the Egyptian empire far up the Nile River into
539 what is now Sudan, and into the Levant, that is, the coastal region at the eastern
540 end of the Mediterranean. Teachers highlight Queen Hatshepsut (ca. 1479-1458
541 BCE) and King Ramses II, also known as Ramses the Great (1279-1212 BCE).
542 During Hatshepsut's reign, as throughout the whole New Kingdom, Egyptian art
543 and architecture flourished, and trade with distant lands brought enormous
544 wealth into Egypt. Ramses II's long reign was a time of great prosperity. He
545 fought battles to maintain the Egyptian Empire and built innumerable temples
546 and monuments throughout Egypt. Students can analyze artistic representations
547 of Hatshepsut, Ramses, and other pharaohs to make interpretations about the
548 divine authority of the pharaoh (how artists represented their power, what
549 qualities a pharaoh should have, and how Egyptian pharaohs were similar to and
550 different from Hammurabi.) After the New Kingdom period, different empires,
551 such as Kush, Persia, and Rome, took over Egypt.

552 Egypt held long trade connections in Eurasia and Africa. Teachers return to
553 question: **From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade, and other**
554 **links grow among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, India,**
555 **and the eastern Mediterranean?** Representatives of the king sailed up the Nile
556 to Kush and penetrated the Red Sea coasts to obtain incense, ivory, and ebony

557 wood. To the northeast, they acquired timber from the forests of Lebanon. New
558 Kingdom pharaohs also nurtured ties through treaties and marriage with Middle
559 Eastern states, notably Babylonia (in Mesopotamia), Mittani (in Syria), and the
560 kingdom of the Hittites in Anatolia. Diplomatic envoys and luxury goods circulated
561 among these royal courts, so that they formed the world's first international
562 community of states. Students may create maps showing the trade routes and
563 products that circulated among Egypt, Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, Persia, and
564 South Asia, as well as in the eastern Mediterranean. Students recognize that the
565 number of states and the intensity of trade connections increased steadily from
566 1500 BCE to 300 CE.

567 The teacher transitions to the study of African civilization of Kush with this
568 question: **What environmental factors helped the Kush civilization grow?**
569 **What impact did civilizations and complex urban societies have on the**
570 **surrounding environment?** Kush lay in the upper Nile Valley, where rainfall
571 was higher and where farm and cattle land stretched far beyond the banks of the
572 river. Kush had complex relations with Egypt. In some periods, Egyptian
573 pharaohs dominated Kush, taxing the population and extracting goods,
574 particularly gold. After the New Kingdom faded, Kush reasserted its
575 independence, though maintaining close contacts with Egypt. Next students
576 explore the question: **From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade,**
577 **and other links grow among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt,**
578 **Kush, India, and the eastern Mediterranean?** Teachers may introduce
579 comparisons between the societies of Kush and Egypt through pictorial

580 representations of the two architectural traditions. For example, kings of Kush
581 built pyramids, although they were smaller than Egypt's structures. In the first
582 millennium BCE, however, Kush developed a distinctive cultural style that
583 included painted pottery, the elephant as an artistic motif, an alphabetic writing
584 system, and a flourishing iron industry. The similarities between Egypt and Kush,
585 and the distinct features of each civilization, offer an opportunity for students to
586 analyze how one culture adopts products, styles, and ideas from another culture,
587 but adapts those borrowings to fit its own needs and preferences. Another way to
588 compare these civilizations is to have students trace how popular goods traded in
589 the Egyptian world were related to the natural resources available in Egypt and
590 Kush. They learn that Egyptian trade influenced the development of laws,
591 policies, and incentives on the use and management of ecosystem goods and
592 services in the eastern Mediterranean and Nile Valley, which had the long-term
593 effects on the functioning and health of those ecosystems, through California EEI
594 Curriculum Units 6.2.6/8, “Egypt and Kush: A Tale of Two Kingdoms.”

595 In the eighth century BCE, Kush's ruler took advantage of political weakness
596 in Egypt to conquer it, uniting a huge stretch of the Nile Valley under the twenty-
597 fifth dynasty for nearly a century. Mapping the trade of Kush merchants with the
598 Arabian Peninsula, India, and equatorial Africa shows students how networks of
599 trade expanded to more and more areas. The Kush state did not seriously
600 decline until the fourth century CE.

601

602 **The Ancient Israelites (Hebrews)**

603 • What were the beliefs and religious practices of the ancient Israelites?

604 How did the religious practices of Judaism change and develop over
605 time?

606 • How did the environment, the history of the Israelites, and their
607 interactions with other societies shape their religion?

608 • How did early Judaism support individuals, rulers, and societies?

609 The ancient Israelites, also known as the Hebrew people, emerged in the
610 eastern Mediterranean coastal region about the twelfth century BCE. To begin

611 the unit, the teacher introduces this question: **How did the environment, the**

612 **history of the Israelites, and their interactions with other societies shape**

613 **their religion?** Originally a semi-nomadic pastoral people living on the

614 Mesopotamian periphery, by the eleventh century BCE they organized the

615 kingdom of Israel. Founding a capital in the city of Jerusalem, they terraced the

616 hillsides in their land and built up an agricultural economy. While their state did

617 not long survive, their religion, which became known as Judaism, made an

618 enduring contribution of morality and ethics to Western civilization.

619 In their study of Judaism as a monotheistic religion, students also have the

620 opportunity to analyze how the religion changed over time. Students focus on the

621 questions: **What were the beliefs and religious practices of the ancient**

622 **Israelites? How did the religious practices of Judaism change and develop**

623 **over time?** While many of main teachings of Judaism, such as a weekly day of

624 rest, observance of law, practice of righteousness and compassion, and belief in

625 one God, originated in the early traditions of the Jews, other early traditions

626 disappeared over time to be replaced by increased emphasis on morality and
627 commitment to study. The teacher poses this historical investigation question to
628 students: **How did the religious practices of Judaism change and develop**
629 **over time?** as they read selected excerpts from the Torah, the first five books of
630 the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), which Christians refer to as the Old Testament.

631 Judaism was heavily influenced by the environment, the history of the
632 Israelites, and their interactions with other societies. The students return to the
633 question: **How did the environment, the history of the Israelites, and their**
634 **interactions with other societies shape their religion?** The many farming
635 metaphors in the Torah show the pastoral/agricultural environment. The fragile
636 position of Canaan in the Fertile Crescent between more powerful neighboring
637 states dramatically affected the history of the Israelites. The Exodus from Egypt
638 was an event of great significance to Jewish law and belief, especially the
639 concept of a special relationship or covenant between the Israelites and God.

640 After the Exodus, Saul, David, and Solomon—three successive kings who
641 probably lived in the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE—united the land of Israel
642 into a state. However, after Solomon's reign, the unified kingdom split into two:
643 Israel in the north and Judah (from which we get the words Judaism and Jews) in
644 the south.

645 In addition to paying attention to change over time, the teacher asks students
646 to consider: **How did early Judaism support individuals, rulers, and**
647 **societies?** Between the tenth and six centuries BCE, Assyria and then
648 Babylonia absorbed all of Mesopotamia, some of Anatolia, and the Levant,

649 including the two Jewish states, into their huge empires. The Babylonians
650 deported many Jews to Mesopotamia, but in 539 BCE, Cyrus the Great, emperor
651 of the new empire of Persia, allowed the exiled Jews to return home. Later their
652 homeland was taken over by both Greek and Roman rulers. In 70 CE, the
653 Roman army destroyed the Jews' temple in Jerusalem. As Jews lost their states
654 and spread out into many other lands, their religious practice and community life
655 had to adapt. During the Babylonian period, exiled Jews wrote down the sacred
656 texts that had previously been orally transmitted. When the temple was
657 destroyed, those texts were carried to new communities and preserved and
658 studied by religious teachers or sages, such as Yohanan ben Zaccai in the first
659 century CE, and passed on to younger generations. Many Jews left Canaan,
660 dispersing to lands throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. They
661 carried with them the beliefs, traditions, and laws that served them in constituting
662 new social and economic communities in many lands.

663

664 **Ancient Greece**

665 • How did the environment of the Greek peninsula and islands, the
666 Anatolian coast, and the surrounding seas affect the development of
667 Greek societies?

668 • What were the differences in point of view and perspective between the
669 Persians and the Greeks, and between Athenians and Spartans?

670 • What were the political forms adopted by Greek urban societies? What
671 were the achievements and limitations of Athenian democracy?

672 • How did Greek thought (a cultural package of mythology, humanistic art, emphasis on reason and intellectual development, and historical, scientific and literary forms) support individuals, states, and societies?

675 • How did Greek trade, travel, and colonies, followed by the conquests of Alexander the Great and the spread of Hellenistic culture, affect increasing connections among regions in Afroeurasia?

678 In this unit students learn about the ancient Greek world, which was centered

679 on the Aegean Sea, including both the Greek peninsula and the west coast of

680 Anatolia (modern Turkey). They begin with the question: **How did the environment of the Greek peninsula and islands, the Anatolian coast, and the surrounding seas affect the development of Greek societies?**

681 An

682 elongated coastline and numerous islands stimulated seaborne trade, as well as

683 easy communication between one community and another. The peninsula's

684 interior of mountains and deep valleys, by contrast, encouraged the

685 independence of small communities and city-states, rather than a unified empire.

686 Several waves of migration through the area brought significant changes to the

687 population and culture. Greeks were oriented toward the sea, dependent on

688 trade to feed themselves, and willing to move and settle colonies.

689 The ancient Greek world developed on the periphery of the Egyptian and

690 Mesopotamian civilizations. Greek foundations were laid by the Minoan

691 civilization on Crete and the Mycenaeans on the Greek peninsula. In the eighth

692 century BCE, Greek-speaking people began a major expansion. They developed

693 more productive agriculture, traded olive oil and wine to distant ports, and

695 founded colonies around the Black Sea, on the northern African coast, and in
696 Sicily and southern Italy. These developments contributed to an increasing sense
697 of shared Greek identity, as well as interchange of ideas and goods with
698 Egyptians, Phoenicians, and other neighboring peoples. Around 800 BCE, the
699 Greek language was written down, and shortly afterwards, Homer wrote the *Iliad*
700 and the *Odyssey*, two foundational epic poems, which shed light on the
701 Mycenaean world of fearless warriors who valued public competition and
702 individual glory.

703 Next teachers introduce the focus question: **What were the differences in**
704 **point of view and perspective between the Persians and the Greeks?** The
705 Greek city-states engaged in a pivotal conflict with the Persian (Achaemenid)
706 Empire in the fifth century BCE, and Greek identification of the Persians as their
707 enemies has heavily influenced later European and American perceptions. The
708 Persian Achaemenid Empire was centered in present-day Iran and had
709 conquered Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia. Its rulers represented
710 themselves as agents of Ahuramazda, the supreme god in the regionally
711 important religion of Zoroastrianism. The Persians subjugated the Greek city-
712 states of western Anatolia, but they failed in three attempts to invade the Greek
713 peninsula and defeat the Greeks, including those in the cities of Athens and
714 Sparta, the most powerful city-states. Herodotus (ca 484-425 BCE) was a Greek
715 scholar who wrote a vivid narrative of these events in *The Persian Wars*, the first
716 history book. The clear distinction between the Greeks and Persians and the
717 continuing influence of Greek sources (rather than a balance between Greek and

718 Persian sources) gives the teacher a good opportunity to teach students about
719 point of view or perspective. Students can use images of the palace art at
720 Persepolis, particularly the tribute bearers staircase, to see the differences
721 between the ways the Greeks represented the Persians and the Persians
722 represented themselves.

723 Because the Greeks experimented with so many different forms of
724 government and wrote so much about politics, this is the ideal point for teachers
725 to focus on government types and citizenship, with the questions: **What were the**
726 **political forms adopted by Greek urban societies? What were the**
727 **achievements and limitations of Athenian democracy?** In contrast to large
728 empires such as the Persian Achaemenids, the Greeks organized the city-state,
729 or *polis*, with central government authority, control of surrounding farmland, and
730 the concept of citizenship. In most city-states, the earliest rulers were wealthy
731 aristocrats, but they were eventually replaced by tyrants, or personal dictators,
732 and later by oligarchies, that is, small groups of privileged males. A major
733 exception to this pattern was Athens, where a series of reforms in the sixth
734 century broadened the base of civic participation and paved the way for a limited
735 democratic system in the following century. In political and cultural terms, Athens
736 in the fifth century BCE was a highly innovative city. Students may compare its
737 system of direct democracy with modern representative democracy. In Athens,
738 every adult male citizen could vote on legislation, and citizens were chosen for
739 key offices by lot. These principles ensured that decision-making lay mostly in
740 the hands of average citizens. Students may analyze the advantages and limits

741 of this system. For example, women, foreigners, and slaves were excluded from
742 all political participation. In contrast to democratic Athens, Sparta was nearly the
743 equivalent of a permanent army base, its male citizens obligated to full-time
744 military training and rigorous discipline. To investigate the question: **What were**
745 **the differences in point of view and perspective between Athenians and**
746 **Spartans?** students use short quotations from Xenophon's writing about the
747 Spartans (about the training of boys and girls) to contrast with short quotations
748 from *Pericles's Funeral Oration*, recorded by Thucydides (from the first four
749 sentences of the third paragraph which address Athenian democracy and self-
750 image, and the fifth paragraph, which contrasts Athenian and Spartan military
751 training.) Since the sentences in these sources are long and complex, the
752 teacher has students underline the subjects, circle the verbs, and draw boxes
753 around the complements or objects of the sentence, points out parallel phrases
754 and clauses, and guides students through identifying references. After this
755 literacy activity, the teacher guides students through identifying the perspectives
756 of Xenophon and Pericles. While Xenophon was an Athenian who greatly
757 admired the Spartans, Pericles was the leader of Athens in the Peloponnesian
758 War against Sparta (431-404 BCE). His funeral oration was propaganda
759 designed to build Athenian morale and support for the war. The teacher then
760 divides the students into groups, and assigns them text-dependent questions.
761 For each of primary sources, students write out a statement of the author's
762 perspective and one piece of evidence in the text (such as a loaded word or a
763 statement that favors one side). Fighting between Greek city-states was chronic

764 and destructive. Athens at that time ruled large areas of the Aegean basin, but
765 Sparta's victory in the Peloponnesian War brought the Athenian empire to an
766 end. It also ended the classical age of Greece. Conflicts among the city-states
767 contributed to the military conquest of Greece by Philip II of Macedonia.

768 The cultural achievements of the classical Greeks were numerous. Teachers
769 have students consider the question: **How did Greek thought (a cultural**
770 **package of mythology, humanistic art, emphasis on reason and intellectual**
771 **development, and historical, scientific and literary forms) support**
772 **individuals, states, and societies?** Athens produced several philosophers
773 (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle), historians (Herodotus, Thucydides), and orators
774 (Demosthenes, Pericles). It also nurtured drama, both tragedy (Sophocles,
775 Euripides) and comedy (Aristophanes). The Greek art and architecture of the era
776 emphasized naturalistic representations of human forms and buildings of
777 beautiful proportions. The rich tales of Greek mythology influenced all forms of
778 literature and art. Students may consider examples of ways in which Greek
779 culture has had an enduring influence on modern society.

780 Next students investigate how Greek culture spread in the Hellenistic era,
781 with the question: **How did Greek trade, travel, and colonies, followed by the**
782 **conquests of Alexander the Great and the spread of Hellenistic culture,**
783 **affect increasing connections among regions in Afroeurasia?** Philip II's son
784 Alexander of Macedonia (ruled 336-323) led a military campaign of
785 unprecedented scope, conquering the Persian Empire, Egypt, Central Asia, and
786 even to the Indus River valley. Following his death, his generals and their sons

787 carved his short-lived empire into separate states. The following two centuries
788 are known as the Hellenistic period. “Hellenistic” refers to the influence of Greek
789 cultural forms in regions far beyond the Aegean, though in fact a lively
790 interchange of products and ideas took place in the broad region from the
791 Mediterranean to India. Athenian democracy did not survive, but Greek ideas,
792 such as language, sculpture, and city planning, mingled creatively with the
793 cultural styles of Egypt, Persia, and India. For example, the Egyptian goddess
794 Isis took on a Greek-like identity and came to be venerated widely in the
795 Hellenistic lands. The era also brought innovations in science and mathematics,
796 for example, the principles of geometry came from Euclid, who lived in the
797 Hellenistic Egyptian city of Alexandria. During the Hellenistic period, exchanges
798 of products, ideas, and technologies across Afroeurasia increased greatly and
799 penetrated into many more regions, culminating with connections to China via
800 the Silk Road. Cosmopolitan Hellenistic cities became sites of encounter for
801 people of different cultures, religions, and regions. Eventually, the Hellenistic
802 kingdoms west of Persia succumbed to the greater military power of Rome,
803 which in turn absorbed many aspects of Greek culture.

804

805 **The Early Civilizations of India**

806 • How did the environment influence the emergence and decline of the
807 Harappa civilization?

808 • How did the religion of Hinduism support individuals, rulers, and societies?

809 • How did the religion of Buddhism support individuals, rulers, and
810 societies?

811 • During the Harappa civilization, the Vedic period, and the Maurya Empire,
812 how did the connections between India and other regions of Afroeurasia
813 increase?

814 In this unit students learn about ancient societies in India. They begin with the
815 environment: **How did the environment influence the emergence and decline**
816 **of the Harappa civilization?** The earliest civilization, known as Harappan
817 civilization after one of its cities, was centered in the Indus River valley, though
818 its cultural style spread widely from present-day Afghanistan to the upper Ganga
819 plain (Ganges River). The Indus River and its tributaries, along with Saraswati (or
820 Sarasvati) River, flow from the Himalaya mountains southward across the plain
821 now called the Punjab, fan out into a delta, and pour into the Arabian Sea. The
822 river valley was much larger than either Mesopotamia or Egypt, and its soil was
823 very rich. Lessons two and four of the California EEI Curriculum Unit 6.5.1, “The
824 Rivers and Ancient Empires of China and India,” have students locate and
825 describe the physical features of the Indus and Ganges river systems in India.
826 Investigating regional seasonal cycles, especially the summer monsoons,
827 students provide examples of how these cycles benefitted the permanent
828 settlement of early Indian civilization, helping them to recognize that humans
829 depend on, benefit from, and can alter the cycles that occur in the natural
830 systems where they live.

831 Arising in the third millennium BCE, the Harappan civilization attained its
832 zenith between about 2600 and 1900 BCE. It was discovered by archaeologists
833 in the 1920s. Digs have revealed that many Harappan cities, including Harappa
834 and Mohenjo-daro, were well planned with streets laid out in grids and well-
835 engineered sewers. Artifacts include pottery, seals, statues, jewelry, tools, and
836 toys. The seals contain writing that has not yet been deciphered. Some of the
837 statues and figurines, as well as images on the seals, show features that are all
838 present in modern Hinduism, such as a male figure that resembles the Hindu
839 God Shiva in a meditating posture, as well as small clay figures in the posture of
840 the traditional Hindu greeting “namaste.” Evidence reveals active commerce
841 between the cities of the Harappan civilization as well as foreign trade with
842 Mesopotamia by sea. A flourishing urban civilization developed in India from as
843 early as 3300 BCE along the Indus River. Archaeologists believe this civilization
844 had its greatest stage of expansion from 2600 - 1700 BCE. The economic basis
845 of the civilization was surplus agriculture, though the cities of Mohenjo-daro and
846 Harappa carried on extensive trade. The Harappan civilization steadily declined
847 after 1900 BCE, perhaps owing to ecological factors such as seismic events,
848 deforestation, salt buildup in the soil, and persistent drought, including the drying
849 up of the Sarasvati River around 2000 BCE.

850 Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), an era
851 named for the *Vedas*, Sanskrit religious texts passed on for generations through
852 a complex oral tradition. In that period, according to many scholars, people
853 speaking Indic languages, which are part of the larger Indo-European family of

854 languages, entered South Asia, probably by way of Iran. Gradually, Indic
855 languages, including Sanskrit, spread across northern India. They included the
856 ancestors of such modern languages as Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali. The early Indic
857 speakers were most likely animal herders. They may have arrived in India in
858 scattered bands, later intermarrying with populations perhaps ancestral to those
859 who speak Dravidian languages, such as Tamil and Telugu in southern India and
860 Sri Lanka today. In the same era, nomads who spoke Indo-Iranian languages
861 moved into Persia. Indic, Iranian, and most European languages are related.
862 There is another point of view that suggests that the language was indigenous to
863 India and spread northward, but it is a minority position.

864 Later in the Vedic period, new royal and commercial towns arose along the
865 Ganges (aka Ganga), India's second great river system. In this era, Vedic culture
866 emerged as a belief system that combined the beliefs of Indic speakers with
867 those of older populations. Teachers focus students on the question: **How did
868 the religion of Hinduism support individuals, rulers, and societies?**

869 Brahmins, that is, priestly families, assumed authority over complex devotional
870 rituals, but many important sages, such as Valmiki and Vyasa, were not
871 brahmins. Ancient Hindu sages (brahmins and others) expounded the idea of the
872 oneness of all living things and of Brahman as the divine principle of being. The
873 Hindu tradition is thus monistic, the idea of reality being a unitary whole.
874 Brahman, an all-pervading divine supreme reality, may be manifested in many
875 ways, including incarnation in the form of Deities. These Deities are worshipped
876 as distinct personal Gods or Goddesses, such as Vishnu who preserves the

877 world, Shiva who transforms it, and Sarasvati, the Goddess of learning. Vedic
878 teachings gradually built up a rich body of spiritual and moral teachings that
879 formed the foundation of Hinduism as it is practiced today. These teachings were
880 transmitted orally at first, and then later in written texts, the *Upanishads* and,
881 later, the *Bhagavad Gita*. Performance of duties and ceremonies, along with
882 devotion and meditation, became dimensions of the supreme quest to achieve
883 oneness with God. That fulfillment, however, demands obedience to the moral
884 law of the universe, called dharma, which also refers to performance of social
885 duties. Dharma consists of natural, universal laws that underlie every person's
886 duty towards themselves, their family, their community and nation. Success or
887 failure at existing in harmony with dharma determines how many times an
888 individual might be subject to reincarnation, or repeated death and rebirth at
889 either lower or higher positions of moral and ritual purity. Progress toward
890 spiritual realization is governed by karma, the principle of cause and effect by
891 which human actions, good and bad, affect this and future lives. Many of the
892 central practices of Hinduism today, including home and temple worship, yoga
893 and meditation, rites of passage (samskaras), festivals, pilgrimage, respect for
894 saints and gurus, and, above all, a profound acceptance of religious diversity,
895 developed over this period.

896 As in all early civilizations, Indian society witnessed the development of a
897 system of social classes. Ancient Indian society formed into self-governing
898 groups, jatis, that emphasized birth as the defining criteria. Jatis initially shared
899 the same occupation and married only within the group. This system, often

900 termed caste, provided social stability and gave an identity to each community.

901 The Vedas also describe four main social categories, known as varnas, namely:

902 Brahmins (priests); Kshatriyas (kings and warriors); Vaishyas (merchants,

903 artisans, and farmers) and Sudras (peasants and laborers). A person belonged

904 to a particular varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by

905 birth itself. In addition, by 500 CE or earlier, there existed certain communities

906 outside the jati system, the “Untouchables,” who did the most unclean work, such

907 as cremation, disposal of dead animals, and sanitation.

908 Relations between classes came to be expressed in terms of ritual purity or

909 impurity, higher classes being purer than lower ones. This class system became

910 distinctive over the centuries for being especially complex and formal, involving

911 numerous customs and prohibitions on eating together and intermarrying that

912 kept social and occupational groups distinct from one another in daily life. Over

913 the centuries, the Indian social structure became more rigid, though perhaps not

914 more inflexible than the class divisions in other ancient civilizations. When

915 Europeans began to visit India in modern times, they used the word “caste” to

916 characterize the social system because of the sharp separation they perceived

917 between groups who did not intermarry and thus did not mix with each other.

918 Caste, however, is a term that social scientists use to describe any particularly

919 unbending social structure, for example, slave-holding society in the American

920 south before the Civil War, which can make the “caste” label offensive. Today

921 many Hindus, in India and in the United States, do not identify themselves as

922 belonging to a caste. Teachers should make clear to students that this was a

923 social and cultural structure rather than a religious belief. As in Mesopotamia and
924 Egypt, priests, rulers, and other elites used religion to justify the social hierarchy.
925 Although ancient India was a patriarchy, women had a right to their personal
926 wealth, especially jewelry, gold, and silver, but fewer property rights than men.
927 They participated equally with their husbands in religious ceremonies and festival
928 celebrations. Hinduism is the only major religion in which God is worshipped in
929 female as well as male form.

930 One text Hindus rely on for solutions to moral dilemmas is the *Ramayana*, the
931 story of Rama, an incarnation or avatar of Vishnu, who goes through many
932 struggles and adventures as he is exiled from his father's kingdom and has to
933 fight a demonic enemy, Ravana. Rama, his wife Sita, and some other characters
934 are challenged by critical moral decisions in this epic work. The teacher might
935 select the scene in which Rama accepts his exile, or the crisis over the broken
936 promise of Sugriva, the monkey king, and then ask students: **What is the moral**
937 **dilemma here? What is the character's dharma?** In this way, students can
938 deepen their understanding of Hinduism as they are immersed in one of ancient
939 India's most important literary and religious texts.

940 Students now turn to the question: **How did the religion of Buddhism**
941 **support individuals, rulers, and societies?** Buddhism emerged in the sixth
942 century BCE in the moral teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the "Buddha".
943 Through the story of his life, his Hindu background, and his search for
944 enlightenment, students may learn about his fundamental ideas: suffering,
945 compassion, and mindfulness. Buddhism waned in India in the late first

946 millennium CE as the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition. Buddhist monks,
947 nuns, and merchants, however, carried their religion to Sri Lanka (Ceylon),
948 Central Asia, China, and Southeast Asia, where many people continue to follow it
949 today. In India, through the teachings of Mahavira, Jainism, a religion that
950 embraced the dharmic idea of ahimsa, or nonviolence, paralleled the rise of
951 Buddhism. It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas
952 Gandhi's ideas of nonviolent disobedience.

953 In the late fourth century BCE Chandragupta Maurya unified most of India
954 through conquest and diplomacy and established the Maurya Empire. Teachers
955 pose the question: **During the the Maurya Empire, how did the connections**
956 **between India and other regions of Afroeurasia increase?** Governing a
957 powerful empire with a million-man army, the Maurya dynasty maintained strong
958 diplomatic and trade connections to the Hellenistic states to the west. The
959 Maurya Empire reached its peak under the rule of Chandragupta's grandson
960 Ashoka (268-232). Beginning his reign with military campaigns, he had a strong
961 change of heart, converted to Buddhism, and devoted the rest of his rule to
962 promoting nonviolence, family harmony, and tolerance among his subjects. The
963 Maurya Empire broke up into small states in the early second century BCE.
964

965 **The Early Civilizations of China**

966 • How did the environment influence the development of civilization in
967 China?

968 • What factors helped China unify into a single state under the Han

969 Dynasty? What social customs and government policies made the

970 centralized state so powerful?

971 • How did the philosophical system of Confucianism support individuals,

972 rulers, and societies?

973 • How did the establishment of the Silk Road increase trade, the spread of

974 Buddhism, and the connections between China and other regions of

975 Afroeurasia?

976 In this unit students study early Chinese civilization, that emerged first in the

977 Huang He (Yellow) River valley with the Shang dynasty (ca.1750-1040 BCE) and

978 later spread south to the Yangzi River area. Students begin their study with the

979 question: **How did the environment influence the development of civilization**

980 **in China?** The Huang He could be a capricious river, exposing populations to

981 catastrophic floods. On the other hand, farmers supported dense populations and

982 early cities by cultivating the valley's loess, that is, the light, fertile soil that

983 yielded bountiful grain crops. Through lesson five of California EEI Curriculum

984 Unit, "The Rivers and Ancient Empires of China and India," students learn about

985 the importance of ecosystem goods and services to the early Chinese. Humans

986 and human communities benefit from the dynamic nature of rivers and streams in

987 ways that are essential to human life and to the functioning of our economies and

988 cultures. Building on its agriculture and natural resources, the Shang society

989 made key advances in bronze-working and written language. Some of the

990 evidence about the Shang comes from "oracle bones," that is, records of

991 divination inscribed on animal bones. The script on the oracle bones is the direct
992 ancestor of modern Chinese characters, a logographic script that differs from the
993 alphabetic systems that developed in other parts of the world.

994 The Zhou dynasty (1122-256 BCE), the longest lasting in China's history,
995 grew much larger than the Shang by subjecting local princes and chiefs of
996 outlying territories to imperial authority. By the eighth century BCE, however,
997 many of these subordinate officers built up their own power bases and pulled
998 away from the center, partly by perfecting iron technology to make armaments.

999 The Zhou gradually weakened, plunging China into a long period of political
1000 instability and dislocation, especially during the Warring States Period, which
1001 lasted nearly two centuries.

1002 In those times of trouble, the scholar Confucius (551-479 BCE) lived and
1003 wrote. His teachings were the basis of the philosophical system of Confucianism
1004 which had a major influence on the development of Chinese government and
1005 society. Students focus on the question: **How did the philosophical system of**
1006 **Confucianism support individuals, rulers, and societies?** He tried to make
1007 sense of the disrupted world he saw, and he proposed ways for individuals and
1008 society to achieve order and goodness. By examining selections from the
1009 *Analects*, or “sayings” of Confucius, students learn that, as with Socrates and
1010 Jesus, his ideas were written down by others at a later time. In Confucian
1011 teachings, which were elaborated by other scholars in later centuries, good
1012 people practice moderation in conduct and emotion, keep their promises, honor
1013 traditional ways, respect elders, and improve themselves through education.

1014 Confucius emphasized ritual, filial piety and respect for social hierarchy, and
1015 promoted the dignity and authenticity of humanity. He encouraged the most
1016 educated, talented, and moral men to serve the state by becoming scholar-
1017 officials, which later made the government of China stronger. He also, however,
1018 instructed women to play entirely subordinate roles to husbands, fathers, and
1019 brothers, though some educated Chinese women produced Confucian literary
1020 works.

Grade Six Classroom Example: The Impact of Confucianism

In order to help her students understand the social impact of Confucianism, Ms. Aquino asks them to read “Selections from the Confucian Analects,” available on the Asia for Educators website from Columbia University in short excerpts with DBQ questions by topic. Specifically, she has students read and analyze Analects 1.2, 4.16, and 12.2, on filial piety and humaneness, excerpts from the *Classic of Filiality*, and Ban Zhao’s *Admonitions for Women* (the first three paragraphs) written by a woman during the Han dynasty, all on the Asia for Educators website from Columbia University.

Ms. Aquino first introduces the sources and explains the purpose of the reading is to help answer the question: **How did the philosophical system of Confucianism support individuals, rulers, and societies?** Students undertake close readings of each document one at a time. They attempt the first reading alone.

In the second reading, Ms. Aquino provides sentence deconstruction charts to

show students the cause-and-effect structure of the compound sentences of these texts. As her students are reading, Ms. Aquino clarifies that “humaneness” refers both to good individual behavior and social order. Ms. Aquino then asks student pairs to discuss: **What is the relationship between individual good behavior and social order (or the greater good of society)?** Each pair writes down their answer and cites one piece of evidence from the reading to support their answer. Ms. Aquino then has pairs of students share out their answers and evidence, and points out that to Confucius nothing was more important to social order than the good behavior of all individuals.

In the third reading, students mark up the text, underline the positive things that a person should do or be, circle the negative things that a person should not do or be, and draw a box around any words they don’t understand. After students have gone through the first two texts, Ms. Aquino asks students to share out the words that they have underlined while the teacher records those words on the board under the title “Men.” Then she explains that the final text, Ban Zhao’s *Admonitions*, was written by a woman for an audience of women, unlike the first two texts, which were written by men mostly for an audience of men. Students do the above close readings with the Ban Zhao text, and the teacher records the positive attributes they have underlined on the board under the title “Women.” Next student groups fill out a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the positive features for men and those for women. As a group, they decide which are the most important similarities and differences, and write a group claim to answer the

question: How was the Confucian ideal behavior different for men and women?

To help English learners with academic vocabulary, Ms. Aquino gives them sentence starters as a model, such as “While under Confucianism men were supposed to _____ and women were supposed to _____, both had the responsibility to _____.” and “To maintain order in society, Confucians believed that both men and women should _____, but only men had the responsibility to _____, while women _____. Finally, each group cites and analyzes three pieces of evidence (one from each source) on an evidence analysis chart.

CA HSS Standards: 6.6.3, 6.6.4

CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8): Research, Evidence and Point of View 5

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: SL.6.1, L.6.5, L.6.6, RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2, WHST.6-8.1, WHST.6-8.7, WHST.6-8.9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.1, 3, 6a, 6b, 10b, 11a; ELD.PII.6.1, 6

1021

1022 Daoism was a second important philosophical tradition begun in this early
1023 period. According to Chinese tradition, Laozi (Lao-tzu) was another sage who,
1024 lived around the same time as Confucius and developed an alternative set of
1025 teachings. Daoism emphasized simple living, shunning of ambition, harmony with
1026 nature, and the possibility of a blissful afterlife. Teachers should note that the
1027 Pinyin Romanization system (Laozi and Daoism) is now more widely used than
1028 the Wade-Giles system (Lao-tzu and Taoism) used in the standards.
1029 Next students turn to Chinese imperial government, with the questions: **What**

1030 **factors helped China unify into a single state under the Han Dynasty? What**
1031 **social customs and government policies made the centralized state so**
1032 **powerful?** China's long era of division ended when Shi Huangdi (221-210 BCE),
1033 a state-builder of great energy, unified China from the Yellow River to the Yangzi
1034 River and created the Qin dynasty. In less than a dozen years, he laid the
1035 foundations of China's powerful imperial bureaucracy. He imposed peace and
1036 regularized laws. He also severely punished anyone who defied him, including
1037 Confucian scholars, and he uprooted tens of thousands of peasant men and
1038 women to build roads, dykes, palaces, the first major phase of the Great Wall,
1039 and an enormous tomb for himself. Teachers may introduce students to the
1040 excavations of this immense mausoleum, which have yielded a veritable army of
1041 life-sized terra cotta soldiers and horses. Shi Huangdi is also well known for
1042 employing scholars to standardize and simplify the Chinese writing system,
1043 which provided the empire with a more uniform system of communication.

1044 Shi Huangdi's Qin Dynasty soon fell to the longer-lasting Han dynasty (206
1045 BCE-220 CE), which unified even more territory and placed central government
1046 in the hands of highly educated bureaucrats. Immersed in Confucian teachings,
1047 these scholar-officials promoted the idea that peace in society requires people to
1048 think and do the right thing as mapped out by tradition. Harmony in the family
1049 was seen by Confucians as the key to harmony in the world. Ethical principles
1050 should uplift the state. Rulers should govern righteously because when they do
1051 they enjoy the trust of their subjects. The benevolent ruler demonstrates that he
1052 possesses divine approval, or the “mandate of heaven,” an idea that first

1053 emerged in Zhou dynasty times. But if the monarch is despotic, he risks losing
1054 that mandate, bringing misfortune on his people and justifiable rebellion.
1055 Promotion of Confucianism helped create a strong, stable government and social
1056 order in China. All educated men (from the emperor on down) were trained to
1057 serve the state and act morally for the good of the people, rather than to seek
1058 profit. The highest social rank (under the imperial family) was to be a scholar-
1059 official, rather than a warrior, priest, or merchant.

1060 In the first century CE, Han officials governed about 60 million people, the
1061 great majority of them productive farmers. Major technological advances of the
1062 era include new iron farm tools, the collar harness, the wheelbarrow, silk
1063 manufacturing, and the cast-iron plow, which cultivators used to open extensive
1064 new rice-growing lands in southern China. Han power declined in the second
1065 century CE, as regional warlords increasingly broke away from centralized
1066 authority, leading to some 400 years of Chinese disunity. However, the ideal that
1067 China should be unified was never lost, and later dynasties modeled themselves
1068 after the Han, as they united the whole territory under one centralized state,
1069 governed by Confucian principles using scholar-officials, and tried to keep the
1070 Mandate of Heaven.

1071 The Han Dynasty also established important connections with other cultures,
1072 as students investigate with the question: **How did the establishment of the**
1073 **Silk Road increase trade, the spread of Buddhism, and the connections**
1074 **between China and other regions of Afroeurasia?** The spread of the Han
1075 empire to the north and west, concern about nomadic raiders from the north led

1076 to seek contact with societies to the west. At the end of the second century BCE,
1077 the Han Chinese empire and the Parthian Persian empire exchanged
1078 ambassadors. Chinese ambassadors (and merchants) gave gifts of silk cloth to
1079 the Parthians, Kushans, and other Central Asian states. Quickly realizing the
1080 value of silk, merchants from Persia, the Kushan and Maurya empires, and other
1081 Central Asian states began to trade regularly with Chinese merchants. Caravans
1082 of luxury goods regularly traveled the overland trade route, “the Silk Road” (really
1083 a number of routes, trails and roads) that crossed the steppes north of the
1084 Himalayas. Maritime commerce along the chain of seas that ran from the East
1085 China Sea to the Red Sea also developed rapidly in that era. Students outline the
1086 land and sea trade routes on a map, preferably a map of Afroeurasia, so that
1087 they can see that connections now spread all the way across the middle of
1088 Afroeurasia, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Ideas also spread along the trade
1089 routes. In the climate of insecurity after the fall of the Han empire, missionaries
1090 began spreading Buddhism along the Silk Road to China. Students analyze the
1091 style of carvings of Buddhas and paintings from Dunhuang and Yungang which
1092 combine Indian, central Asian, and Chinese artistic influences.

1093

1094 **The Development of Rome**

1095 • What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman Republic? Why
1096 did the Roman Republic fall?

1097 • How did the Romans advance the concept of citizenship?

1098 • How did the environment influence the expansion of Rome and its
1099 integrated trade networks?

1100 • How did other societies (the Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han China,
1101 Parthian Persia) influence and affect the Romans?

1102 The final unit on Rome presents a challenge to teachers because it is also
1103 taught in seventh grade. The sixth-grade teacher emphasizes the development of
1104 the Roman Republic and the transition to the Roman Empire, focusing on the
1105 themes of environment, political systems and citizenship, and increasing trade
1106 and connections between societies. The teacher also uses this unit to draw
1107 together major themes from the course by comparing Rome to earlier and
1108 contemporaneous societies and provide closure to the course. The teacher
1109 begins with the influences of the Greeks and Hellenistic culture on Rome, with
1110 this question: **How did other societies (the Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han**
1111 **China, Parthian Persia) influence and affect the Romans?** Originally a small
1112 farming community on the central west coast of the Italian peninsula, Rome was
1113 on the edge of the prosperous eastern Mediterranean sphere dominated by
1114 Greeks, Egyptians, and peoples of the Levant. The Roman Republic grew in the
1115 Hellenistic environment and drew on the trade, technology, and culture of the
1116 Greeks. Through military action, diplomacy, and the practice of granting
1117 citizenship to conquered peoples, the Romans were able to unite the entire
1118 coastal area around the Mediterranean into a single empire and to extend that
1119 empire into Europe. Roman culture absorbed much of the Greek and Hellenistic
1120 traditions. Rome's own innovations included the arch, concrete, technologically

1121 sophisticated road building, and a body of laws that has had immense influence
1122 on legal systems in Europe, the United States, and other parts of the world.
1123 Students probe more deeply into Roman politics with this question: **How did**
1124 **the Romans advance the concept of citizenship?** Citizenship, republican
1125 institutions, and the rule of law are major Roman contributions to civics.
1126 According to Roman tradition, Vergil's *Aeneid*, and the works of the historian
1127 Livy, Romulus, a descendant of the Trojan Aeneas, founded the city in 753 BCE.
1128 Kings first ruled Rome, but a republic replaced the monarchy in 509 BCE. The
1129 Romans adopted a distinct form of democracy, based on the Athenian model,
1130 with legislative power resting not with the entire mass of citizens, but with their
1131 representatives. Even though the political system experienced many problems as
1132 Rome grew in size, Roman culture provided very stable idea of citizenship.
1133 Whereas the ancient Greeks valued competition and individual achievement, the
1134 highest virtue to the Romans was duty to their families, to the state, and to the
1135 gods. They idealized the virtue of public service, as depicted in the story of
1136 Cincinnatus, who according to Roman sources was living on a farm when he was
1137 chosen to serve as dictator during a hostile invasion in 458 BCE. Cincinnatus
1138 gave up his power after the defeat of the enemy to return to his simple life on the
1139 farm. His selfless devotion to public service inspired later leaders such as
1140 George Washington. Just as Confucian teachings on the ideal of government
1141 service strengthened Chinese government and society, the Roman ideal of the
1142 duty of a citizen to the state gave considerable stability to the state and social
1143 order.

1144 The legend of Cincinnatus also emphasizes that the duty of a Roman to the
1145 state was often to fight. The Roman military was large, tough, and powerful.
1146 Environmental factors also influenced Rome's expansion, which students
1147 analyze with this focus question: **How did the environment influence the**
1148 **expansion of Rome and its integrated trade networks?** During the Early
1149 Republic (509-264 BCE), the Romans took over the entire Italian peninsula,
1150 whose fertile valleys and coastal plains produced bountiful harvests of wheat,
1151 wine, olive oil, and wool. Rome defeated its nearby neighbors in a series of wars
1152 and partially incorporated them into the young state, which ensured a steady
1153 supply of soldiers for the growing army. Expansion around the Mediterranean rim
1154 began in the third century BCE, when Rome defeated the maritime state of
1155 Carthage in the Punic Wars. By devastating Carthage, Rome gained thousands
1156 of square miles of wheat land in Sicily and North Africa, as well as a windfall of
1157 Spanish silver. In the decades before and after the turn of the millennium, Rome
1158 also conquered the Hellenistic kingdoms of Greece and Egypt.

1159 As Rome grew in size, the republican government that had worked for it as a
1160 small city-state became more and more overwhelmed. The teacher introduces
1161 the focus question: **What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman**
1162 **Republic? Why did the Roman Republic fall?** Rome's constitution distributed
1163 power among elected officials, the citizen body, and the oligarchic senate, but in
1164 practice decision-making lay with the senate, especially with its most influential
1165 members. One problem was that only certain elite citizens, called the patricians,
1166 had access to the senate and thus to political power. Other citizens, called the

1167 plebeians, challenged the elite patricians in violent conflicts. Plebeians finally
1168 won legal protections against patrician power and access to high political offices.
1169 However, as the Roman army conquered the entire Mediterranean basin,
1170 massive wealth from trade and spoils, as well as large numbers of slaves, poured
1171 into Italy. This increased the divide between wealthy (senators, patricians, and
1172 some plebeians) and poor (most plebeians, conquered foreigners, and slaves)
1173 and put great strain on the Roman political system.

1174 By the Late Republic (133-31 BCE), political competition between senators
1175 became intense and increasingly violent. A succession of ambitious generals
1176 used the loyal armies to challenge each other and, increasingly, the authority of
1177 the entire senate, which the statesman and author Cicero symbolized. This
1178 discord culminated in the dictatorship of Julius Caesar and, under his successor
1179 Augustus (31 BCE-14 CE), in the establishment of what was in essence a
1180 monarchy and a new ruling dynasty. Augustus refused the title of king and
1181 pretended to defer to the senate, but his control over Rome was complete.
1182 Rulers afterwards took the title emperor. For much of the first two centuries CE,
1183 the Roman Empire enjoyed political and territorial stability, and the provinces
1184 benefited from new roads, a standardized currency, economic growth, and
1185 peaceful conditions.

1186 Returning to the question: **How did the Romans advance the concept of**
1187 **citizenship?** students evaluate the Roman Republic. The Roman republic
1188 provided a model for future democratic institutions and the development of civic
1189 culture and citizenship, in the early U.S. and other modern nations. Students

1190 consider ways in which modern writers, artists, and political leaders have
1191 appropriated Greek and Roman ideals, values, and cultural forms as worthy
1192 models for civil society. Besides the borrowed words (senate and capitol, for
1193 example), architectural styles, and rhetorical models, later democratic states
1194 were inspired by the heroic civic models of Cincinnatus, the Horatius brothers,
1195 and Cicero, who defended the state and its republican institutions even when it
1196 was not in their self-interest. The struggle of Roman groups to widen political
1197 participation to the plebeians, to control the growing empire without allowing
1198 individuals to grow too wealthy or too powerful, and to harness the power of the
1199 military leaders to the service of the state, also offered sobering examples of how
1200 republicanism could be undermined by social conflict, individual self-interest, and
1201 military power. The teacher asks students why Romans allowed Julius and then
1202 Augustus Caesar to take over the republic. Both were successful military leaders
1203 who delivered peace after a long period of civil war. **Did the Romans give up**
1204 **freedom for order and peace?**

1205 However, even after Rome became an empire, the idea of citizenship
1206 remained strong. Wealthy Romans regularly contributed their personal funds to
1207 build civic structures, fund entertainments for the general public, and improve city
1208 life. The teacher has students analyze visuals from Pompeii of dedication
1209 plaques and inscriptions that are evidence of Roman civic contributions. **Why did**
1210 **wealthy Romans pay for these public structures and events? What did**
1211 **citizenship mean to them? How did the Romans advance the concept of**

1212 **citizenship?** The teacher connects the Roman example to the responsibilities of
1213 students as citizens of the U.S. and to opportunities for service learning projects.

1214 Students make a social hierarchy pyramid of Roman society and recognize
1215 that by the Late Republic, Rome had a huge population of slaves. The teacher
1216 has them compare and contrast the social hierarchy of Rome and other earlier
1217 societies. Roman fathers had power over their families and dependents. Women
1218 who were not enslaved could achieve citizenship, though with several
1219 restrictions. They could neither attend the popular assemblies that had certain
1220 legislative powers nor serve as elected magistrates. They could, however, make
1221 wills, sue for divorce, circulate openly in public, and hold certain religious offices.
1222 Also, wives and mothers in wealthy families sometimes exerted great influence
1223 on public decisions. The teacher emphasizes that all the urban societies studied
1224 in the course, like most premodern societies, were patriarchies, with small
1225 wealthy and powerful elite groups and very large poor populations who worked at
1226 farming. Unlike Han China, however, much of the farming in Rome was done by
1227 slaves.

1228 Finally students investigate the question: **How did other societies (the**
1229 **Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han China, Parthian Persia) influence and affect**
1230 **the Romans?** Rome at its height was at the center of a web of trade routes by
1231 land and sea. Huge plantations worked by slave labor produced grain to feed the
1232 Roman cities. Uniting the diverse environments of Egypt, North Africa, Syria,
1233 Anatolia, Greece and Europe gave Romans access to vast resources. Roman
1234 roads united the empire, and trade routes by land and sea connected it with

1235 eastern Asia. Wealthy Romans dressed in silk imported from China and jewels
1236 imported from India. Students create maps of the trade routes across Afroeurasia
1237 that connected the Roman and Han empires with the Persians and Central
1238 Asians as middlemen. The teacher has student pairs examine a physical map of
1239 Afroeurasia and a map of the Roman Empire at its furthest extent. He or she
1240 asks the students to predict where the Romans would expand next. Student pairs
1241 write down a prediction and give geographical evidence to support it. This
1242 analysis shows that the Romans had actually conquered all the desirable land
1243 around them, with the exception of Persia. To the north was a cold land of forests
1244 and barbarians, to the south and southeast were deserts, to the west, the ocean.
1245 The teacher points out that this presented huge problems to Rome, which they
1246 will study in seventh grade.

1247 The Romans could not expand to the east because they could not defeat the
1248 Persian empire, first under the Parthians and then under the Sasanians. In the
1249 first century BCE, Roman attacked the Parthians from their base in Syria. This
1250 resulted in a catastrophic military defeat for Rome and confirmed the Parthian
1251 empire as Rome's chief rival for control over Mesopotamia. The Parthian and
1252 Sasanian Persian emperors promoted the religion of Zoroastrianism to
1253 strengthen the power of their state and build up a national identity. Fighting
1254 continued between the two empires along the border in a bitter conflict. However,
1255 religious ideas and trade products spread back and forth between the two
1256 enemies. Many Romans began to follow Mithraism, a religion from Persia and
1257 the east. Christianity spread back and forth across the Roman-Persian border.

California Department of Education
December 2015